



The
Multicultural
Artists'
Coalition

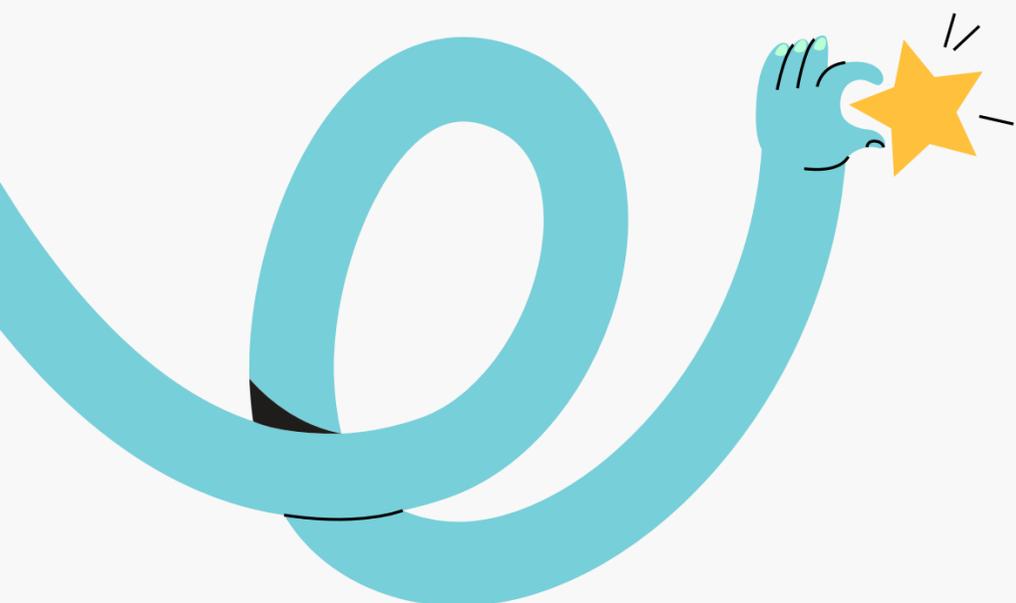
La
Coalition
des Artistes
Multiculturels

2025 Annual Report



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Overview



In 2025, the Multicultural Artists' Coalition (MAC-CAM) delivered a full year of programming designed to reduce barriers to participation in the arts and to advance equity and inclusion in Ottawa's cultural sector. Our activities brought together Indigenous, Black, racialized, immigrant, refugee, newcomer, and other equity-deserving artist demographics, fostering cultural exchange, collaborative learning, and community connection. These events reached broad public audiences, helping ensure that local artists and their creative contributions were visible and celebrated within the City's cultural life.

Over the course of the year, within the ART+ program, we delivered 8 capacity-building workshops, 2 showcases, and 2 exhibitions, serving more than 194 artists, reaching over 359 community members as audiences, collaborators, and learners. MAC-CAM invested \$16,000 in artist fees, affirming our commitment to fair compensation and valuing artists' labour.

Three interconnected goals guided our 2025 programming:

1

Capacity Building – equipping artists with tools and knowledge to sustain their practice.

2

Visibility – creating platforms for underrepresented artists to share their work with the public.

3

Self-Expression & Belonging – celebrating cultural identity, resilience, and creativity in safe, inclusive spaces.

Key 2025 Programs

ART+ Grant Writing Program

From April to June 2025, MAC-CAM delivered the ART+ Grant Writing Program, an intensive, hands-on series for 10 artists who identify as Indigenous, Black, POC, or newcomers. Participants developed real grant applications while being guided by experienced facilitators.

Here are some artist testimonies:

Since starting this workshop: I attended a music summit as part of capital city music week, applied to and been accepted to a SOCAN Indigenous songwriting camp (taking place in Toronto next month), and learned a lot about grant writing through attending this workshop series (like learning that certain funders will fund the acquisition of resources whereas others will only fund renting). Thank you for putting on this great series, and I know that attending it has given me the momentum that will carry me (and our project Mar x Maracle) forward.

Jacob Maracle, June 2025



Thank you for offering such an important program to artists like me, who struggle with administrative tasks, even when it comes to my own projects. Your program made my grant application process feel a lot less daunting, specifically because you made the entire process transparent by bringing in speakers from all sides of the industry: grant officers, grant recipients and impactful community organizers. I'm excited to share that I was awarded \$4,000 from the Music Recording Projects. I cannot express to you how encouraging it is to have resources such as these available for emerging artists such as myself.

Thank you!

kezi



ART+ Professional Development Workshops

The **ART+ Workshop Series** is a free professional development program designed to equip artists with the practical tools, knowledge, and confidence needed to build sustainable creative careers in Ottawa and beyond.

Offered by the Multicultural Artists' Coalition (MAC-CAM) in partnership with Arts Ottawa, the series provided hands-on training in essential topics such as grant writing, budgeting, marketing, legal literacy, and other core aspects of navigating the arts sector. Open to artists of all disciplines, the program intentionally prioritized newcomer, immigrant, refugee, IBPOC and other Equity-Deserving artists, fostering equitable access to opportunities and resources. Through expert-led sessions, peer learning, and community-building, the ART+ Workshop Series strengthened the capacity, visibility, and long-term success of Ottawa's diverse artistic community.

Artist testimony:

I wanted to let you know that your advice on grant writing paid off. I was able to land the City of Ottawa's creation and production grant. When I found out I fell to my knees and cried because 2 years of work had finally paid off.

An Nguyen

Sessions included:

**Grants Info Session with the
Canada Council for the Arts
and the City of Ottawa
(April 24)**



**Budget Workshop for
Professional Artists
(May 22)**

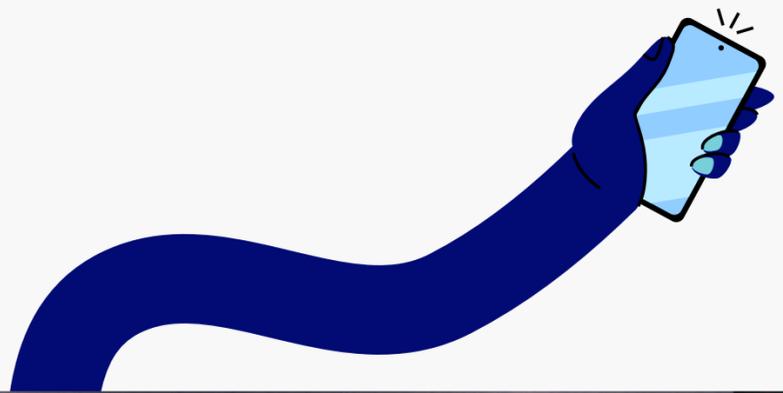
**Digital Marketing Workshop
for Professional Artists
(June 26)**



**Grow Grant Info Session
(September 18th)**

ART+ Showcases and Exhibitions

The ART+ Showcases and Exhibitions are multidisciplinary public arts events that highlight the creative excellence, cultural expression, and lived experiences of newcomer, immigrant, refugee, Indigenous, Black, and equity-deserving artists in Ottawa.



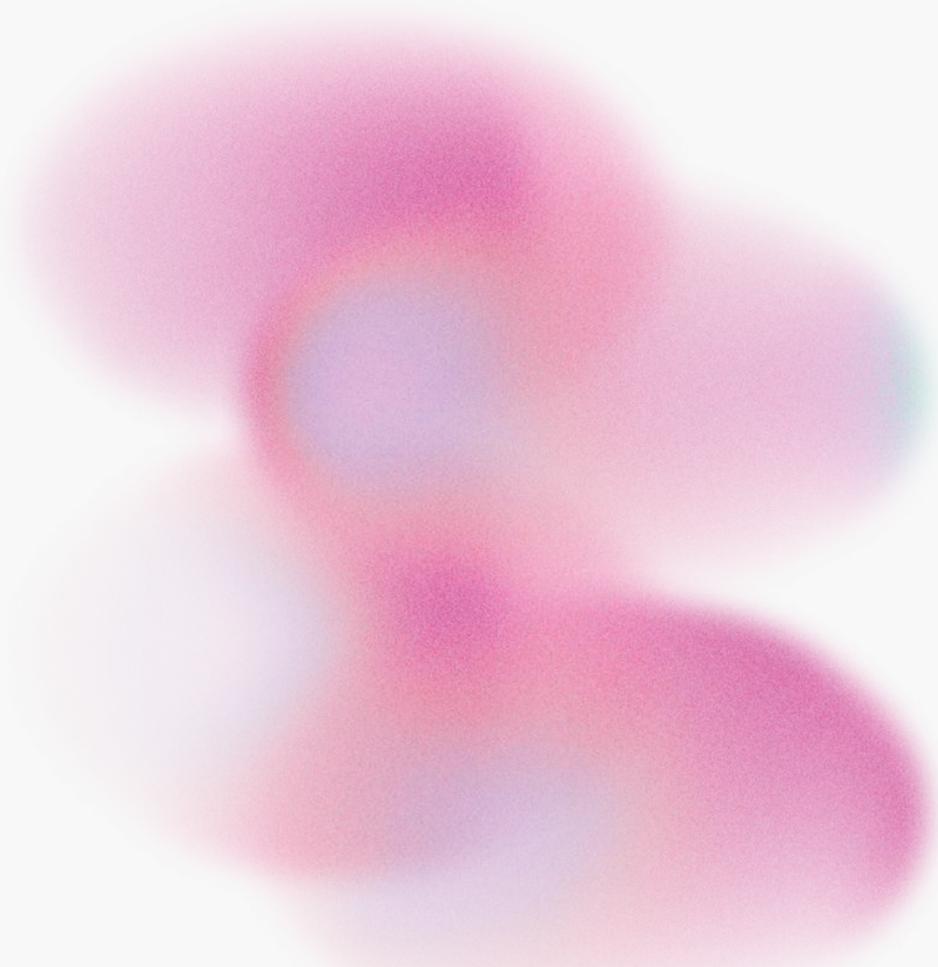


ART+ Spring Showcase
April 12, 2025 – Arts Court Studio

The 2025 ART+ Spring Showcase brought together six multidisciplinary performers whose work reflected the diversity and vibrancy of Ottawa’s immigrant, newcomer, and equity-deserving arts communities. The lineup featured dancers **Akshata Rao** (Indian semi-classical and folk), **Paul Mbisa** (Hip Hop & Afro), and **Regis Mushimire** (Afro, Hip Hop, contemporary), musical performers **Mar x Maracle** (soul-country-punk fusion) and **Simora** (R&B/Soul), and spoken word artist **Xavior Kayvon Gough**, whose performance blended poetry, vocals, and instrumentation. The showcase created a lively space for cultural expression and storytelling, offering audiences an immersive and inclusive artistic experience.



1. Paul Mbisa and Regis Mushimire, 2. Akshata Rao, 3. Simora, 4. Mar x Maracle, 5. Xavior Kayvon Gough

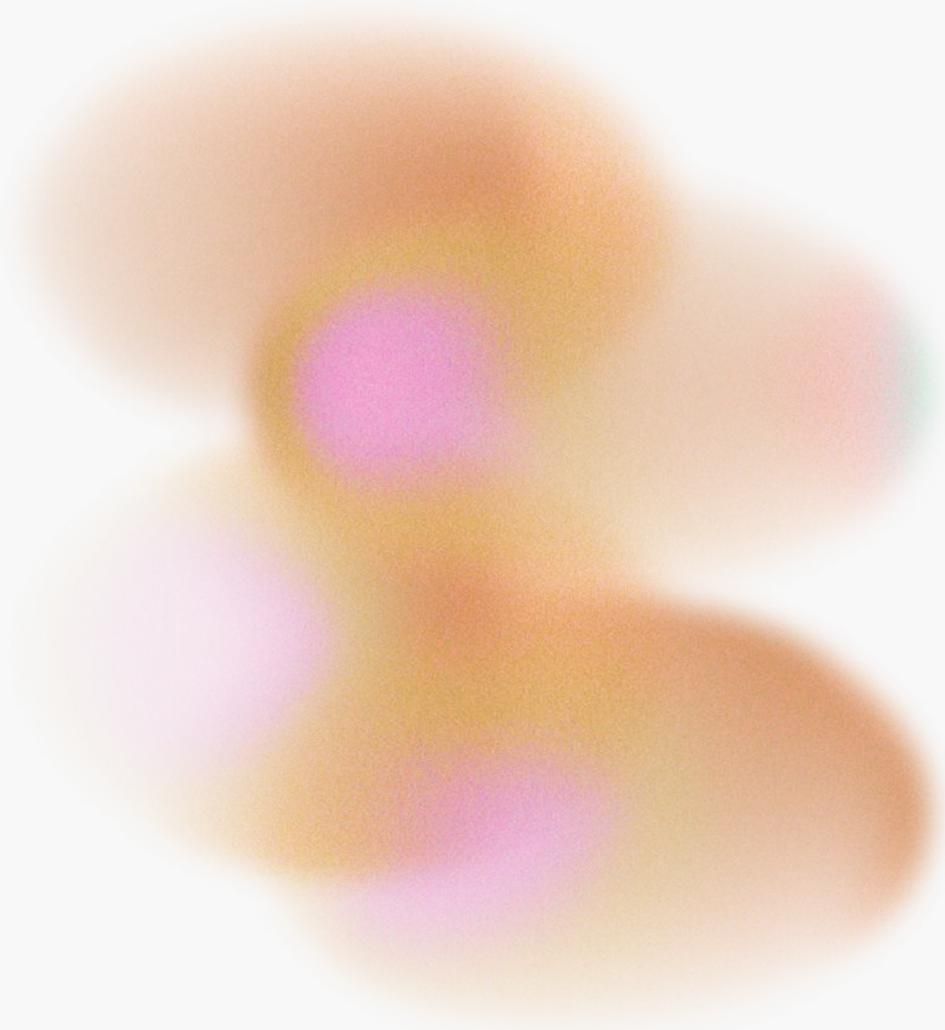


ART+ Summer Exhibition
July 11–12, 2025 – Arts Court Atelier

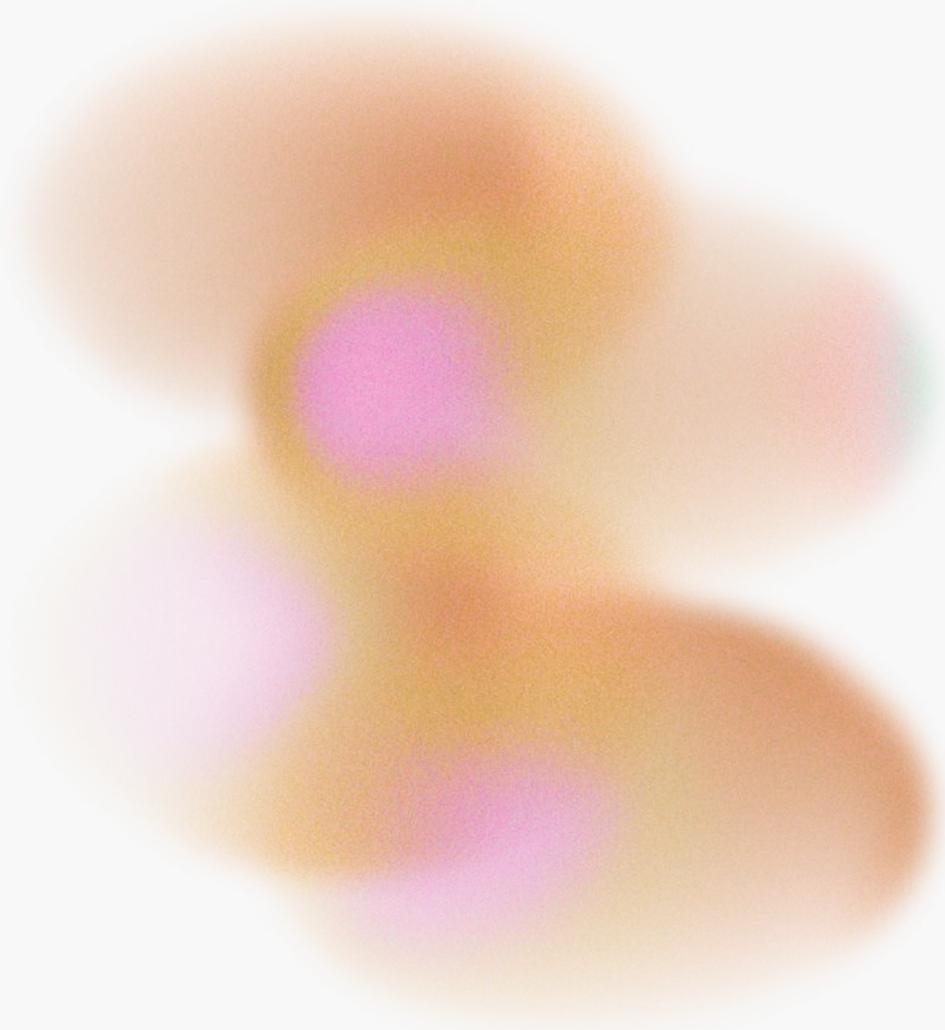
The ART+ Summer Exhibition showcased the work of five visual artists whose practices explored themes such as cultural memory, identity formation, colonial legacies, emotional landscapes, and the resilience of lived experience. Featured artists included **Zaagaasige Giizis** (painting), **Linh VH Nguyen** (photography), **Zineb Allaoui** (painting), **Dereck Bassa / 13assa** (photography), and **Natmarú Gamboa** (drawing and sculpture). Together, their works offered layered reflections rooted in Anishinaabe, Vietnamese-Canadian, Amazigh, Ivorian-Canadian, and Colombian diasporic perspectives, transforming the gallery into a site of dialogue and discovery.



1. Natmarú Gamboa, 2. Linh VH Nguyen, 3. Zaagaasige Giizis, 4. Dereck Bassa, 5. Zineb Allaoui



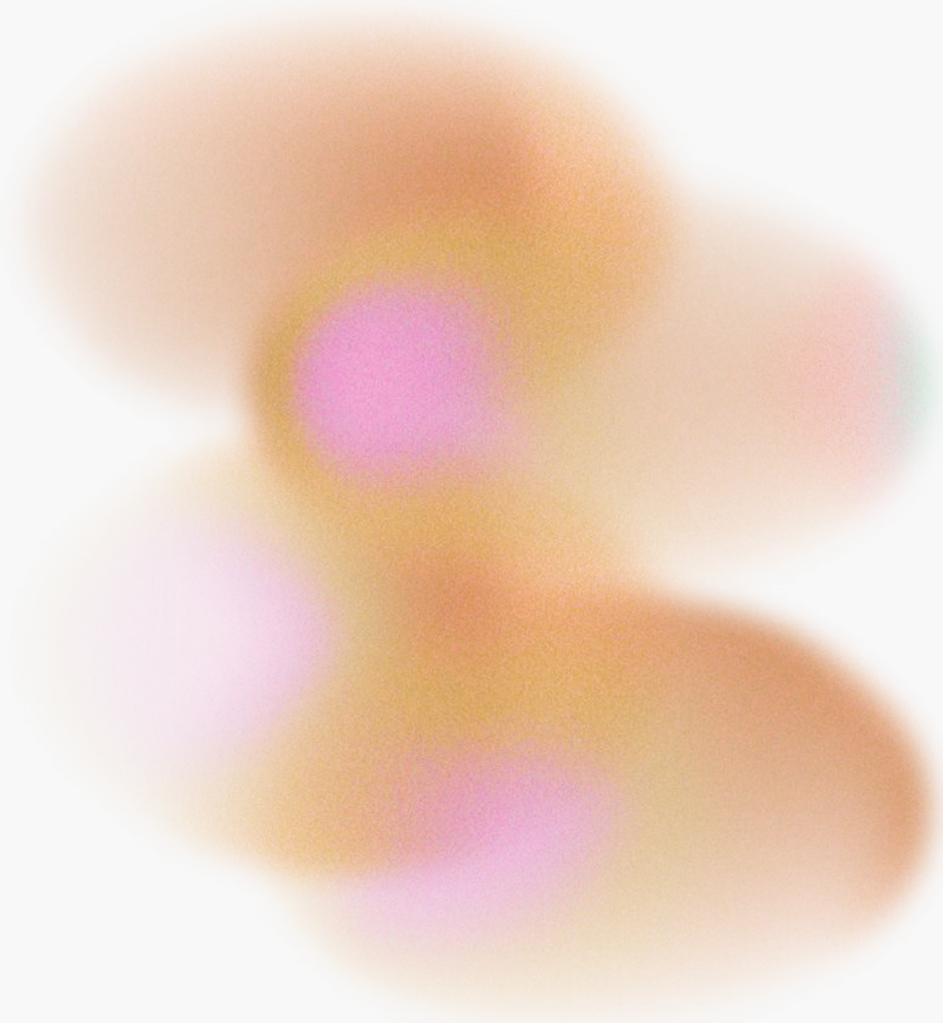
ART+ Fall Exhibition
Threads of Belonging
October 3-4, 2025 – Arts Court Atelier



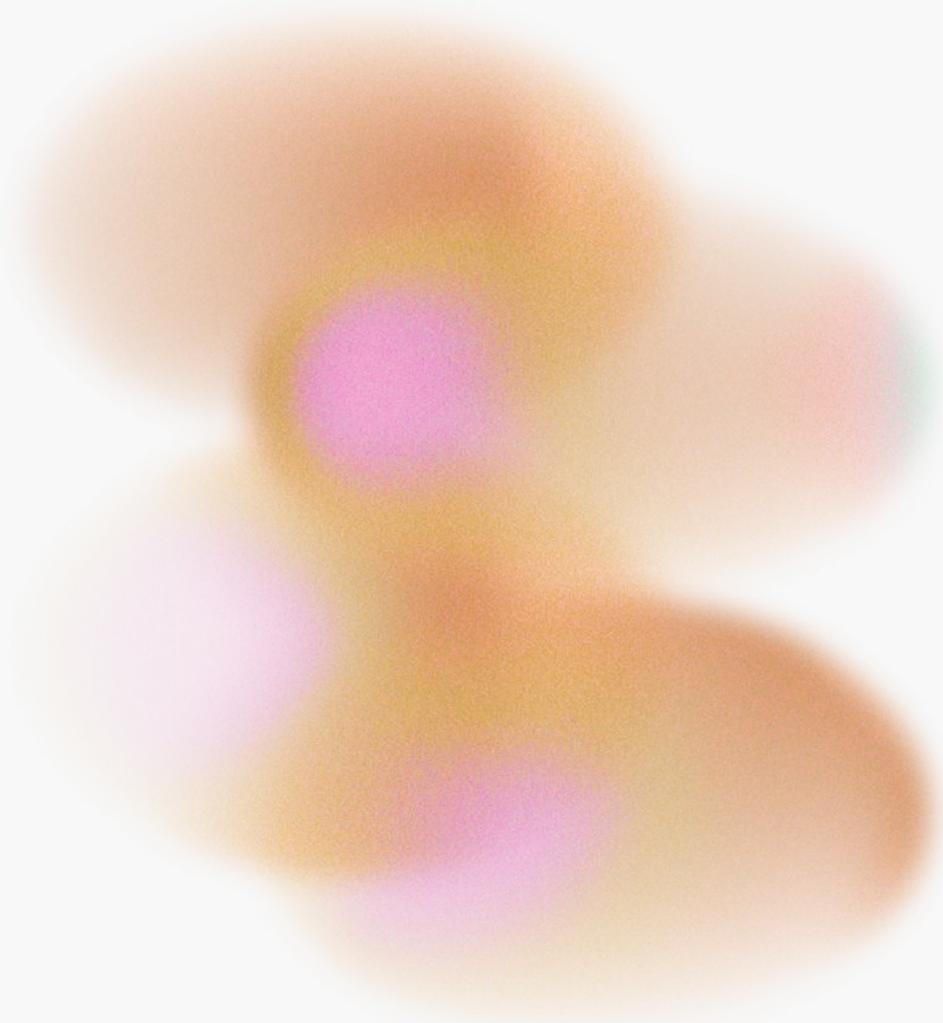
Threads of Belonging brought together five professional artists (**Carmina Miana, Stephanie Hill, Yu-Sheng Chiu, Céline Khairallah, and Mona Jennings**) whose practices draw from global craft traditions, personal histories, and cross-cultural identities. Their works explored belonging, memory, migration, motherhood, hybridity, and the interconnectedness of human and natural worlds. The exhibition invited audiences to reflect on how individual narratives weave into collective cultural fabrics, deepening community engagement through visual storytelling.



1. Yu-Sheng Chiu, 2. Monna Jennings, 3. Céline Khairallah, 4. Stephanie Hill, 5. Carmina Miana



ART+ Fall Showcase
October 4, 2025 – Arts Court Studio



The 2025 ART+ Fall Showcase featured a dynamic group of performing artists whose talents spanned music, dance, and spoken word, celebrating the cultural plurality of Ottawa's arts scene. Performers included internationally acclaimed Juno Award-winning singer **Kellylee Evans**, rising Afro-fusion artists **Kezi** and **Erik Alvaro**, hip hop performer **Gfreezy**, and R&B/rap artist **King Jay**. Their performances blended personal narratives with global influences, creating an energetic and inspiring evening of artistic innovation and community connection.



1. Gfreezy, 2. King J, 3. Kellylee Evans, 4. Erik Alvaro, 5. Kezi

2025 by the Numbers

2

exhibitions

8

workshops

2

showcases

232+

artists engaged

\$16,000

in artist fees paid

349+

community members reached

Our Digital Content Reach

We provide artists with professional marketing tools and promotion to increase visibility, strengthen their public presence, and connect their work with broader audiences.

72+

social media posts

8

newsletters

45

new reels

9

videos

100+

new followers

2,414

unique website visitors

Video content for the 2025 ART+ Spring Showcase

Watch one of the latest videos we produced [here](#).



Impact and Looking Ahead



MAC-CAM's impact in 2025 is deeply rooted in the organization's origins. Established in 2019, MAC-CAM was born from an extensive public consultation process with immigrant, refugee, and IBPOC artists living in Ottawa. The resulting community report identified critical gaps in representation, access, professional development, and equitable compensation. These findings shaped MAC-CAM's mandate and guided six years of programming that centred artist self-determination, cultural autonomy, and long-term capacity building. The successes of 2025—expanded workshops, high-quality showcases and exhibitions, increased artist participation, and strong community partnerships—reflect the continued relevance of those original community-identified needs.





As MAC-CAM enters its next phase, 2026 marks a pivotal moment. The organization will undertake a new **2026–2031** Strategic Plan, developed in partnership with EVOKE Culture 2.0, to assess our growth, refine our mandate, and set strategic priorities for the coming years. This process will include deep consultation with artists, Elders, partners, board members, and community stakeholders to understand emerging needs within newcomer, Indigenous, Black, and equity-deserving arts communities. The plan will update our Theory of Change, strengthen governance and operational structures, introduce a Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework, and position MAC-CAM for sustained impact and financial resilience.

Looking ahead, MAC-CAM remains committed to expanding accessible platforms for artistic expression, increasing economic opportunities for marginalized artists, and fostering a more equitable and culturally vibrant arts ecosystem in Ottawa. Through renewed visioning and community collaboration, MAC-CAM will continue to build on six years of momentum and shape the next chapter of artist-led, community-driven cultural development in the National Capital Region.

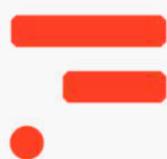
Funders

MAC-CAM gratefully acknowledges the generous financial support of our funders. Their support makes our work with artists and communities possible.



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

an Ontario government agency
un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



**OTTAWA
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Arts Court



The
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La
Coalition
des Artistes
Multiculturels

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